

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 VALLET 00910 071120Z

11
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 EB-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01 COME-00 SIL-01

LAB-04 FEA-01 /087 W
----- 114045

R 070700Z AUG 75
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6339
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION NATO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VALLETTA 0910

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, MT
SUBJECT: MINTOFF ADDRESS ON MALTESE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

1. PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF DELIVERED AN UNEXPECTED TELEVISION AND RADIO BROADCAST TO THE NATION AUGUST 5, ON THE EVE OF HIS 59TH BIRTHDAY. CONCENTRATING ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS SINCE HIS LAST SUCH BROADCAST AT THE END OF DECEMBER, MINTOFF'S MAIN PURPOSE APPEARED TO BE A DESIRE TO REINFORCE HIS IMAGE AS THE MODERATE LEADER WHO IS WORKING TO IMPROVE DOMESTIC CONDITIONS FOR THE AVERAGE MALTESE.

2. MINTOFF BRIEFLY REVIEWED THE UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION IN MALTA, CLAIMING THAT THINGS ARE ACTUALLY BETTER IN MALTA THAN IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES. HE SAID THAT WHILE MALTA HAD LOST JOBS DUE TO THE RECESSION, NEW ONES HAD BEEN CREATED, AND THERE HAD BEEN AN OVERALL REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED BETWEEN DECEMBER 1974 AND JUNE 1975.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 VALLET 00910 071120Z

3. MINTOFF PROUDLY ANNOUNCED REDUCTIONS IN VARIOUS

UTILITY RATES, INCLUDING ELECTRICITY, GAS AND "HEAVY OIL" FOR INDUSTRIAL USE. HE STATED THAT THESE REDUCTIONS WERE POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF A RECENT AGREEMENT WITH PRESIDENT QADHAFI, WHEREBY MALTA IS NOW IMPORTING "ALL" OF ITS OIL FROM LIBYA, AT "MUCH CHEAPER" PRICES THAN ARE AVAILABLE TO OTHER COUNTRIES.

4. MINTOFF ALSO STATED THAT BECAUSE OF THE DECREASE IN THE PRICE OF IMPORTED OIL, THE GOM IS NOW ABLE TO EARMARK "SAVINGS" OF A HALF MILLION MALTESE POUNDS (DOLS 1.3 MILLION) FOR THE MARSA SHIPYARD DPROJECT, AND ANOTHER HALF MILLION POUNDS FOR IMPROVEMENTS AT MALTA'S CENTRAL POWER STATION.

5. ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE, MINTOFF ACKNOWLEDGED THAT MALTA IS SUFFERING FROM A SERIOUS WATER SHORTAGE THIS SUMMER, BECAUSE OF INADEQUATE RAINFALL AND SHARP INCREASE IN CONSUMPTION DUE TO THE TOURIST BOOM. AS A RESULT, THE GOM WAS SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASING WATER RATES FOR HOTELS AND RESTAURANTES TO ENCOURAGE WATER CONSERVATION BY THESE ESTABLISHMENTS.

6. REFERRING TO THE RECENT OUTBREAK OF FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE IN MALTA, MINTOFF SAID THAT THE GOM WOULD REPLACE EACH ANIMAL WHICH HAD BEEN DESTROYED, SO THAT THE AFFECTED FARMERS WOULD NOT SUFFER ANY LOSSES. HE STATED THAT THE DISEASE HAD COST MALTA 252 COWS, 1,368 PIGS AND 180 SHEEP.

7. FINALLY, MINTOFF ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD SOON INTRODUCE LEGISLATION IN PARLIAMENT TO MAKE IT COMPULSORY FOR ALL EMPLOYERS, BITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, TO PAY A LM36 CHRISTMAS BONUS (DOLS 95) TO THEIR WORKERS. (MINTOFF HAD PLEDGED TO TO THIS LAST YEAR, WHEN A NON-COMPULSORY LM 20 BONUS WAS PAID BY ALL GOVERNMENT AND PARA-STATAL FIRMS, BUT NOT ALL PRIVATE EMPLOYERS DID SO.)

8. COMMENT: MINTOFF SEEMS TO HAVE ADOPTED THE PRACTICE OF DELIVERING SIMILAR HOMILIES TO THE PUBLIC EVERY SIX MONTHS OR SO, OBVIOUSLY WITH AN EYE ON THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS. DESPITE HIS FLAMBOYANCE IN PARLIAMENT, AND HIS SHOWMANSHIP WHEN DEALING WITH FOREGIN AFFAIRS, THESE SPEECHES ARE DELIVERED WITH A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 VALLET 00910 071120Z

CONSIDERABLE DEGREE OF RESTRAINT AND PERSON-TO-PERSON EMPHASIS. THE ONLY SIGNIFICANT ANNOUNCEMENT ON THIS OCCASION WAS MINTOFF'S CLAIM THAT MALTA IS NOW OBTAINING CHEAP OIL FROM LIBYA. GOM ACTIVITIES IN THE PETROLEUM FIELD REMAIN A SUBJECT OF GREAT INTEREST BECAUSE OF THEIR IMPACT ON THE POCKETBOOK OF THE AVERAGE MALTESE. IN TAKING CREDIT FOR A REDUCTION IN MALTESE UNEMPLOYMENT, MINTOFF NEGLECTED TO MENTION THAT THE MAIN REASON FOR THE APPARENT

IMPROVEMENT IS THE CONTINUANCE OF SEVERAL GOM SPONSORED
WPA TYPE MAKE-WORK PROGRAMS. DESPITE THESE EFFORTS,
UNEMPLOYMENT REMAINS A MAJOR PROBLEM IN MALTA. SMITH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, SPEECHES, TELEVISION BROADCASTING, RADIO BROADCASTING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ifshinsr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975VALLET00910
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750272-1025
From: VALLETTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750872/aaaadlc.tel
Line Count: 118
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ifshinsr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 JUN 2003 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <05 JUN 2003 by ifshinsr>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MINTOFF ADDRESS ON MALTESE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, MT, (MINTOFF, DOMINIC)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006